

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims, reflects all changes currently being made thereto, and replaces all earlier versions and listings:

1. (previously presented): A management system, connected to a communication line, for managing maintenance of a plurality of printing apparatuses, comprising:

a reception unit that receives a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus having use history information showing that the first printing apparatus was managed and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line, and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a search unit that searches for first information related to a contract corresponding to the first ID received by said reception unit;

a generation unit that generates second information related to a contract for the second printing apparatus, based on the first information searched for by said search unit and machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, wherein said generation unit further generates display information for displaying the generated second information; and

a transmission unit that transmits the information generated by said generation unit via the communication line,

wherein the contract is related to at least one of contract term and maintenance of the printing apparatus.

2. - 44. (canceled).

45. (previously presented): An information processing method used in a management system, connected to a communication line, for managing maintenance of a plurality of printing apparatuses, the method comprising:

a reception step for receiving a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus having use history information showing that the first printing apparatus was managed and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line, and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a search step for searching for first information related to a contract corresponding to the first ID received in said reception step;

a generation step for generating second information related to a contract for the second printing apparatus to be newly managed, based on the first information searched for in said search step and machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, wherein said generation step further includes generating display information for displaying the generated second information; and

a transmission step for transmitting the information generated in said generation step via the communication line,

wherein the contract is related to at least one of contract term and maintenance of the printing apparatus.

46. (previously presented): A computer-readable memory medium storing program codes to be executed by a management system, connected to a communication line, for managing maintenance of a plurality of printing apparatuses, the program codes comprising:

a reception step for receiving a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus having use history information showing that the first printing apparatus was managed and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line, and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a search step for searching for first information related to a contract corresponding to the first ID received in said reception step;

a generation step for generating second information related to a contract for the second printing apparatus to be newly managed, based on the first information searched for in said search step and machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, wherein said generation step further includes generating display information for displaying the generated second information; and

a transmission step for transmitting the information generated in said generation step via the communication line,

wherein the contract is related to at least one of contract term and maintenance of the printing apparatus.

47. (canceled).

48. (currently amended): A management system; ~~connected to a communication line~~; for managing ~~maintenance of contracts~~ for a plurality of printing apparatuses, comprising:

a first reception unit that receives a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus for which a contract has been made and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, ~~the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line~~; and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a second reception unit that receives a user instruction indicating whether or not a contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus in case of replacing the first printing apparatus by the second printing apparatus;

a search unit that searches for first information related to the contract corresponding to the first ID received by said first reception unit, when said second reception unit receives the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus; and

a generation unit that generates second information related to the contract for the second printing apparatus, based on the first information searched for by said search unit and machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation unit generates third information related to a new contract regardless of the printing apparatus managed in the past, when said second reception unit receives the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is not to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus,

wherein the contracts are related to a charge amount for printing per sheet in the plurality of printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation unit generates the second information based on a charge condition determined in accordance with the machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, and

wherein, if the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a copier, the charge condition is determined such that the charge amount for printing per sheet in the contract for the second printing apparatus is discounted as compared to that in the contract for the first printing apparatus.

49. (currently amended): A system according to claim 48, wherein the contract is further related to at least contract term and maintenance of the printing apparatus.

50. (currently amended): A system according to claim 48, wherein said generation unit further generates display information for displaying the generated second information[[:]], and wherein said system further comprises a transmission unit that transmits the display information generated by said generation unit via a the communication line.

51. - 53. (canceled).

54. (currently amended): A management method, for use in a management system that is connected to a communication line; for managing maintenance of contracts for a plurality of printing apparatuses, said method comprising:

a first reception step, of receiving a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus for which a contract has been made and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line; and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a second reception step, of receiving a user instruction indicating whether or not a contact for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus in case of replacing the first printing apparatus by the second printing apparatus;

a search step, of searching for first information related to the contract corresponding to the first ID received in said first reception step, when the user instruction

is received in said second reception step indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus; and

a generation step, of generating second information related to the contract for the second printing apparatus, based on the first information searched for in said search step and machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes generating third information related to a new contract regardless of the printing apparatus managed in the past, when the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is not to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus is received in said second reception step,

wherein the contracts are related to a charge amount for printing per sheet in
the plurality of printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes generating the second information
based on a charge condition determined in accordance with the machine types of the first
and second printing apparatuses, and

wherein, if the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a printer and
the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a copier, the charge condition is
determined such that the charge amount for printing per sheet in the contract for the second
printing apparatus is discounted as compared to that in the contract for the first printing
apparatus.

55. (currently amended): A method according to claim 54, wherein the contract is further related to ~~at least~~ contract term and maintenance of the printing apparatus.

56. (currently amended): A method according to claim 54, wherein said generation step further includes generating display information for displaying the generated second information, and said method further comprising a transmission step, of transmitting the display information generated in said generation step via ~~a the~~ communication line.

57. - 59. (canceled).

60. (currently amended): A computer-readable storage medium, encoding a program for causing a computer to perform a management method, ~~for use in a management system that is connected to a communication line;~~ for managing ~~maintenance of contracts for~~ a plurality of printing apparatuses, said method comprising:

a first reception step, of receiving a first ID for specifying a first printing apparatus for which a contract has been made and a second ID for specifying a second printing apparatus as an apparatus to be newly managed, ~~the first ID and the second ID being transmitted via the communication line;~~ and the first printing apparatus and the second printing apparatus being different from each other;

a second reception step, of receiving a user instruction indicating whether or not a contact for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the

first printing apparatus in case of replacing the first printing apparatus by the second printing apparatus;

a search step, of searching for first information related to the contract corresponding to the first ID received in said first reception step, when the user instruction is received in said second reception step indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus; and

a generation step, of generating second information related to the contract for the second printing apparatus, based on the first information searched for in said search step and machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes generating third information related to a new contract regardless of the printing apparatus managed in the past, when the user instruction indicating that the contract for the second printing apparatus is not to be made based on the contract for the first printing apparatus is received in said second reception step,

wherein the contracts are related to a charge amount for printing per sheet in the plurality of printing apparatuses,

wherein said generation step includes generating the second information based on a charge condition determined in accordance with the machine types of the first and second printing apparatuses, and

wherein, if the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a copier, the charge condition is determined such that the charge amount for printing per sheet in the contract for the second

printing apparatus is discounted as compared to that in the contract for the first printing apparatus.

61. - 63. (canceled).

64. (new): A system according to claim 48, wherein the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a color printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a monochromatic copier.

65. (new): A system according to claim 48, wherein the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a color printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a monochromatic printer.

66. (new): A method according to claim 54, wherein the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a color printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a monochromatic copier.

67. (new): A method according to claim 54, wherein the machine type of the first printing apparatus is a color printer and the machine type of the second printing apparatus is a monochromatic printer.